



St Gregory's RC Primary School

Harton House Road East, Harton, South Shields, NE34 6DZ

School Unique Reference Number: **108716**

Inspection dates: 03 – 04 May 2017
Lead inspector: Angela Boyle

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Catholic Life:		Outstanding	1
Collective Worship:		Outstanding	1
Religious Education:		Outstanding	1

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS FOR PARENTS AND PUPILS

St Gregory's RC Primary School is an outstanding Catholic school because:

- St Gregory's is a warm and welcoming school where everyone shares the vision of the headteacher. It is very clear as soon as you enter the school that the prime purpose is Catholic education, helping pupils to develop their faith and their understanding of God's love for them.
- The Catholic Life of the school is outstanding because the well-being and personal development of each pupil is at the heart of the school's vision and mission. Excellent relationships at all levels are a strength of the school.
- The quality of Collective Worship is outstanding because it is central to the life of the school. Staff and pupils plan and lead high quality acts of worship and pupils act with the deepest reverence and respect.
- The quality of Religious Education is outstanding because staff know their pupils well and consistently teach lessons that engage and enthuse pupils. Leaders and managers ensure that monitoring and evaluation is accurate, timely and embedded in the work of the school.

FULL REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

- St Gregory's is an average sized primary school serving the parishes of Holy Rosary and St Gregory's in South Shields.
- A large majority of the pupils are baptised Catholics and are mainly from white British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils eligible for pupil premium is lower than average.
- The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well above average.

WHAT DOES THE SCHOOL NEED TO DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- Improve the quality of Collective Worship by:
 - ensuring there is a systematic progression of skills in pupils' planning, preparing and leading Collective Worship.
- Improve the quality of Religious Education by:
 - ensuring that the systems the school has in place for feedback to pupils, opportunities for pupil self-assessment and reflection on their learning are made more explicit and embedded across the school.
- Improve the Catholic Life of the School by:
 - conducting a review of Relationships and Sex Education provision, policy and resources.

CATHOLIC LIFE

THE QUALITY OF THE CATHOLIC LIFE OF THE SCHOOL

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- The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.
- The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- Pupils make an outstanding contribution to the Catholic Life of St Gregory's; they take full advantage of the opportunities the school provides for their personal well-being and development. Pupils eagerly take on positions of responsibility and leadership within the school and the wider community.
- Pupils have a strong voice which enables them to take an active part in shaping activities with a religious character. They have recently been involved in the review of the school's mission statement and have adapted it and claimed it as their own. Their own version, which is more 'child friendly' was completed collaboratively in pastoral care groups.
- The behaviour of pupils is exemplary, they demonstrate care and compassion and have a very strong sense of justice. They speak about their sponsored child, Malkus, and of very generously supporting many other fundraising appeals.
- Pupils are confident and secure in their own stage of spiritual and emotional growth and demonstrate exemplary behaviour towards adults and each other. They are very proud of their school, as one pupil said, 'Now I am in year six I want to be a good example to the little ones. There is no other school quite like St Gregory's for kindness, friendship and caring for others.'
- They are regularly involved in parish and Diocesan celebrations.

The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- Catholic values are given the highest priority and are firmly embedded in the life of the school. People are at the heart of this nurturing family community where all are valued. Staff are excellent role models for the pupils and genuinely live out their role as members of this faith community.
- Excellent relationships are evident within the school and in the wider school and parish community. Everyone is mutually supportive and go about their work joyfully, all stakeholders are fully committed to St Gregory's being the best it can be.

- The school is a prayerful community and the learning environment reflects the school's mission and celebrates its Catholic character with vibrant displays, artefacts and the creation of sacred spaces throughout the school.
- Pastoral care groups are a clear strength of the school and time spent in these groups is a special time for all. Personal and social education is effectively planned and consistently well taught. The relationships and sex education programme is in place and refers to Catholic teachings and principles, however this is now in need of review.
- Parents are fully supportive of the school and the opportunities it presents to their children, 'the experiences the children receive empower them, and they are given the opportunity to lead'.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school is outstanding.

- The headteacher, leaders and governors have a very clear understanding of the vision of Catholic education and the role of the Catholic school in the mission of the church. Together they communicate a very strong sense of purpose and deep commitment to the Catholic Life of the school. They are highly ambitious for all children and are excellent role models.
- School self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate with information gathered from a range of sources. Leaders and governors know their school well and give a high priority to the development of Catholic Life. Self-evaluation has clear links to the school development plan which targets improvement.
- Staff are very well supported and feel valued. High quality performance management, alongside well-matched continuing professional development opportunities are provided to all staff.
- Governors make a significant contribution to the Catholic Life of the school. They have an excellent grasp of the school's strengths and areas for development. They are passionate about the school are highly visible and actively involved.
- School successfully engages parents and carers who feel that, 'the Catholic ethos is strong, and there is genuine love for one another in the school family'.

COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

THE QUALITY OF COLLECTIVE WORSHIP

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- How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.
- The quality of provision for Collective Worship.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship is outstanding.

- St Gregory's is a very prayerful community where worship is a regular and meaningful part of the day. Collective Worship engages the interest of all pupils and inspires them to reflect and respond with great joy.
- From a very young age pupils are deeply reverent and respectful during Collective Worship. They are reflective and focused during prayer times. They sing with great enthusiasm with many pupils confidently taking solo singing roles.
- Pupils plan and lead worship for each 'Come and See' topic at an age appropriate level. The school has a wide variety of artefacts and resources which the children use to add to their worship experiences. They are involved in planning, preparing and leading Collective Worship across the school, however skills are not developed incrementally and do not build on what has gone before.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of the church's liturgical year, seasons and feasts and describe how they are celebrated in the school and parish. They have a love for special devotions such as the Rosary and Stations of the Cross which they celebrate and share with staff.
- There is a deep sense of respect for faiths other than their own, pupils are well informed and have an excellent understanding of other world faiths.

The quality of provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Collective Worship is central to the life of the school and forms the heart of each day, it is inclusive and reflective.
- From the beginning of their school life in reception class pupils are encouraged to have a special relationship with God through prayer and are given many opportunities to develop this.
- Well established programmes for weekly and daily worship which have a clear purpose, message and direction, based upon Sunday Gospel readings, special feast days and the churches seasons, demonstrate a deep understanding of the liturgical year. Devotion to Mary was a focus during the inspection, supporting traditional Catholic teaching alongside the use of contemporary resources.

- Collective Worship planning indicates that pupils are competently guided in the preparation and delivery of worship in an age appropriate way. However the progression of skills is not clearly defined.
- Focal points and displays in each classroom and throughout the school are thought provoking, well-resourced and provide very good support for reflection and prayer. Prayer stations have an interactive element and reflect the liturgical season engaging most pupils.
- Parents and governors comment on how much they value Collective Worship experiences. Families are involved in pupils' religious development through the many special events and celebrations they attend.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship is outstanding.

- Leaders have excellent knowledge of how to plan and deliver quality worship and ensure this is shared with staff and pupils. They model this in school and are dedicated to the provision of high quality acts of worship across the school.
- Leaders and managers have a deeply rooted understanding of the church's liturgical year, its seasons, rites and symbols. A range of artefacts, symbols and information technology are used to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding. Therefore worship is delivered in a way that is relevant to pupils using a range of skills and quality resources.
- Leaders regularly monitor the quality of Collective Worship and it is under regular review. They constantly seek ways to improve upon the pupils' experience.
- Leaders ensure staff receive formation in the development of spiritual and liturgical understanding. They have attended diocesan training and implement what they have learned, and this is highly valued by all staff.
- Leaders regularly seek the views of parents, who comment upon the 'high quality' acts of worship. Their responses are highly valued and lead to further development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

THE QUALITY OF RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

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- How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.
- The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.
- How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education is outstanding.

- Pupils enjoy and understand the value of Religious Education; they speak with great enthusiasm about their learning and have very positive attitudes to their lessons. They concentrate well and apply themselves with enthusiasm to the challenges set by their teachers.
- Children are proud of their work and always aim to do their best. They are religiously literate and reflective. Behaviour for learning is outstanding.
- Pupils enter school with knowledge and skills that are below what is expected for their age. They make good or better progress throughout foundation stage and key stage one. This continues throughout key stage two. Pupils' books evidence a good standard of work across all year groups.
- Inspection findings and evidence provided by the school show no notable difference between groups of learners.
- Pupils identified as having special educational needs make very good progress because of the high levels of additional targeted support they receive from skilled staff.
- Data indicates that over time pupil attainment is at least in line with the Diocesan averages, at all key stages. Current data indicates that the slight dip in key stage two in 2016 was cohort specific and will rise again this year.

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education is outstanding.

- Teaching is consistently good with much that is outstanding. Teachers plan lessons well and are passionate about the subject. Lessons are interesting and imaginative and use a wide range of high quality resources.
- Teachers have very high expectations of work and behaviour which are effectively communicated to pupils. They employ a wide range of teaching strategies, including the use of drama, role-play, art and media to enthuse pupils.
- Teachers have excellent subject knowledge and know their pupils well. Lessons have a clear focus and as a result pupils acquire knowledge quickly and are secure in their learning. teaching assistants are effectively deployed and efficiently support individual and group learning.

- Assessments are regular and systematic and both internal and external moderation indicate that levelling is accurate.
- Marking is of a consistently high quality, pupils are given detailed feedback on how well they have done and some are given areas for improvement.
- School has embraced mastery curriculum principles across core subjects including Religious Education. This aims to ensure that expectations are not limited by the tasks set by teachers. Mixed ability work, Feedback Friday and acceleration lessons all contribute to this and the quality of work in pupils books evidence the success of this approach. However marking and feedback systems are not explicit or consistently applied across the school.
- Peer tutoring is well established and impacts on pupil learning, confidence and self-esteem. There is some evidence of pupils being involved in self-assessment but there is not a coherent approach across the school.

How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education is outstanding.

- Leaders and managers are well informed of current developments in Religious Education. The Religious Education team share the same vision and are deeply committed to ensuring that Religious Education is of high quality resulting in pupils achieving well. Their commitment supports and inspires the rest of the staff and they ensure that staff are very well informed of priorities in Religious Education.
- Leaders carry out regular monitoring and analysis of planning, teaching and learning. Clear steps for improvement are identified. School self-evaluation is thorough and robust and there is a wealth of evidence and data within school which is integral to the priorities in the school improvement plan.
- Religious Education has a very high profile in the school. The school uses its resources very effectively to provide teaching assistant support in each classroom for all subjects including Religious Education.
- Key governors are frequent visitors to the school and have a high profile. They are extremely supportive but also confident in their ability to appropriately challenge the leadership team. Governors are well informed of standards across the school.
- Sacramental preparation is given a high priority by the school, is fully embedded in the Religious Education curriculum and is highly valued by parents and pupils.

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

HOW EFFECTIVE THE SCHOOL IS IN PROVIDING CATHOLIC EDUCATION:**1****CATHOLIC LIFE:****1**

The extent to which pupils contribute to and benefit from the Catholic Life of the school.

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The quality of provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for the Catholic Life of the school.

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COLLECTIVE WORSHIP:**1**

How well pupils respond to and participate in the school's Collective Worship.

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The quality of provision for Collective Worship.

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How well leaders and managers promote, monitor and evaluate the provision for Collective Worship.

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RELIGIOUS EDUCATION:**1**

How well pupils achieve and enjoy their learning in Religious Education.

1

The quality of teaching and assessment in Religious Education.

1

How well leaders and managers monitor and evaluate the provision for Religious Education.

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SCHOOL DETAILS

School name	St Gregory's RC Primary School
Unique reference number	108716
Local authority	South Tyneside
This Inspection Report is produced for the Rt. Reverend Séamus Cunningham the Bishop of Hexham and Newcastle Diocese under canon 806 of Canon Law. For voluntary aided schools it also fulfils the responsibility the Governing Body has to inspect the school under s48 of the Education Act 2005.	
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Head teacher	Mr K J Smithson
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